

Message Text

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43

ACTION EUR-12

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7957

INFO AMEMBASSY BERN

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

C O N F I D E N T I A L VIENNA 1821

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, XG, AU

SUBJECT: NEXT PRESIDENT OF SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL - KREISKY?

1. VIENNA'S "DIE PRESSE" (INDEPENDENT, MODERATELY CONSERVATIVE), IN LEAD ARTICLE MARCH 5 BY LONDON CORRESPONDENT ROLAND HILL, SPECULATES UPON POSSIBLE DESIRE OF AUSTRIAN CHANCELLOR BRUNO KREISKY TO SUCCEED HIS AILING COUNTRYMAN BRUNO PITTERMAN AS PRESIDENT OF SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL (SI). AS IDEOLOGICAL COUNTERWEIGHT, ARTICLE SAYS BRITAIN'S LEFT-WING LABOR
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MP IAN MIKARDO IS UNDER CONSIDERATION FOR POSSIBLE NEW

OFFICE OF PRESENT OF SI BUREAU; GENERAL SECRETARY, AUSTRIAN HANS JANITSCHKE, WOULD BE REPLACED BY HOLLANDER HENRI VANDENBERG OR SWEDE BENGT CARLSSON. ARTICLE CONCLUDES THAT POST FOR MIKARDO, WHO CONSIDERS PM WILSON "TRAITOR TO SOCIALISM," WOULD REPRESENT PERSONAL VICTORY FOR MIKARDO OVER WILSON, WHOSE OWN CANDIDACY FOR SI PRESIDENCY FAILED BECAUSE CONTINENTAL COLLEAGUES COULD NOT ACCEPT WILSON'S "OPPORTUNISTIC EUROPE POLICY."

2. COMMENT: LABATT RAISED QUESTION OF POSSIBLE KREISKY CANDIDACY FOR SI PRESIDENT WITH AUSTRIAN SOCIALIST MP KARL CZERNETZ SEVERAL WEEKS AGO. AT THAT TIME, SURFACING PLANS FOR CHANGES IN KREISKY CABINET AND TALK OF KREISKY'S TURNING OVER INCREASING RESPONSIBILITY TO A NEW VICE CHANCELLOR AND COMING GENERATION OF SOCIALIST PARTY LEADERS HAD EARMARKS OF POSSIBLE EFFORT TO PAVE WAY FOR BROADER, MORE ENERGETIC KREISKY ROLE ON EUROPEAN AND WORLD SCENES (VIENNA 870), AND SI PRESIDENCY MIGHT HAVE PROVIDED LEGITIMATE FORUM FOR CHANCELLOR WHOSE INTERNATIONAL ROLE IS OTHERWISE CIRCUMSCRIBED BY AUSTRIAN NEUTRALITY. CZERNETZ, WHO FILLS IN UNOFFICIALLY FOR PITTERMAN, TOLD LABATT THAT SI PRESIDENCY WAS OUT OF QUESTION FOR KREISKY WHILE HE WAS STILL CHANCELLOR. ALTHOUGH LABATT REMINDED CZERNETZ THAT KREISKY MIGHT NOT SHARE HIS VIEW INASMUCH AS KREISKY HIMSELF ONCE SUGGESTED SWEDISH PM PALME SHOULD HAVE TIME FOR JOB, CZERNETZ INSISTED THAT NO PLANS FOR KREISKY CANDIDACY WERE BEING CONSIDERED. CZERNETZ HAS NOT BEEN AVAILABLE FOR FURTHER COMMENT BUT TWO TOP SOCIALIST PARTY LEADERS TOLD LABATT MARCH 8 THAT KREISKY HAD ASSURED INTIMATES PRIVATELY THAT HE DID NOT WANT SI PRESIDENCY; HOWEVER, UNLIKE CZERNETZ, THEY FORSAW NO BOJECTIONS WITHIN PARTY SHOULD KREISKY EVENTUALLY RESPOND TO APPEAL FROM BRANDT AND OTHERS. THEY SAID KREISKY'S NAME HAD COME UP IN THIS REGARD ALONG WITH THOSE OF OTHER ACTIVE HEADS-OF-GOVERNMENT AS POSSIBLE WAY TO BOOST PRESTIGE AND INFLUENCE OF SI AT CRITICAL TIME FOR SEVERAL WEST EUROPEAN SOCIALIST PARTIES, BUT REAL QUESTION WAS WHETHER

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ANY OF THEM WOULD HAVE TIME TO BE MORE THAN FIGUREHEAD.BUCHANAN

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